

Finance Committee Meeting Minutes

November 2, 2006

Those Present: Al DeVito – Chair, Sharon Estrella, Richard Knabel, Brian Athearn, Skip Manter.

Guests: Bruce Stone – Town Accountant, Jim Osmundsen (filming).

The meeting was opened at 3:15 p.m.

Article 2 was read. Chuck Hodgkinson addressed the Finance Committee about this article having to do with funding for the Space Needs Committee. He explained that this committee needs \$20,000 for the expense of two public hearings, advertising and a final report.

A motion was made to recommend the amount of \$20,000 for this article for the Space Needs Committee. The motion was seconded and opened for discussion. The discussion centered around which buildings were to be included in the Space Needs review (Animal Control, Library, Police, and the Town Hall). The motion passed with 5 in favor and none opposed.

Article 10 was read: To see if the Town will vote to Transfer from the “Sale of Cemetery Lots” fund, the sum of Ten Thousand Dollars (\$10,000) for maintenance and surveying to the West Tisbury, Lambert’s Cove and North Tisbury Cemeteries. Glenn Hearn explained that when a lot is sold, half the money goes into a trust fund for maintenance of cemeteries. Voters then have to vote to approve the money being taken out. The fund presently has \$38,000. The request is for \$10,000. This includes \$4,100 for repairs to the fencing, \$2,000 for brush trimming, \$2,000 to fix tilting headstones and \$2,000 to be used for surveying database software. Also, \$500.00 is needed to fix an electrical pedestal, which runs a water pump.

A motion was made to recommend Article 10. The motion was seconded and approved with 4 in favor and 1 opposed.

Article 14 was read: To see if the Town will vote to Transfer from Free Cash the sum of Thirty Thousand dollars (\$30,000) for the purpose of resurfacing and maintaining the Library/Howes House parking lot. Glenn Hearn gave the background on this article. The parking lot is in need of repair. Kent Healy has done a design and survey. The pervious concrete substance to be used was discussed. Part of the \$30,000 is needed to do maintenance on the parking lot after it is redone. Richard, Brian and Skip observed that more information was needed about the substance to be used. Sharon Estrella commented that this resurfacing goes against the wishes of the family that gave the land to the town. Jen Rand commented that the family had been contacted and that they are OK with this resurfacing. It was decided to wait to vote on this article until Richard Olsen could comment on the material to be used.

Article 5 was read and discussed: To see if the town will vote to appropriate an additional Nine Thousand Dollars to be used by the board of Assessors for a valuation update of real and personal property to met triennial certification of values as required by Mass. State Law for Fiscal Year 2008, of which Two Thousand, Five Hundred Seventy Dollars (\$2,570) will be redirected from unspent funds from the FY2005 valuation update, Article 5, Special Town Meeting, January 13, 2004 and the remaining Six Thousand, Four Hundred Thirty Dollars from Free Cash.

Jo Ann Resendes was present to answer questions. The discussion centered on who was contacted to respond to this RFP. Sharon Estrella commented that she was disappointed that

only Vision Appraisal was contacted. She thought that the town had sent a signal at the annual town meeting that they did not want to use Vision. Jo Ann replied that the advertising for the RFP was done in compliance to the Uniform Procurement Law and that Vision was the only one to reply.

A motion was made to recommend Article 5. The motion was seconded and passed with 4 in favor and 1 opposed.

Article 6 was read: To see if the town will vote to transfer from Free Cash the sum of One Thousand Five Hundred Dollars (\$1,500) to be used by the Board of Assessors for the purpose of digitizing the town's tax maps in preparation for acquiring a GIS system. This would allow the mapping of sites, (wells septic etc.) and produce tax maps currently drawn by hand.

A motion was made to recommend Article 6. The motion was seconded and approved with 4 in favor and 1 opposed.

Richard Olsen was now in attendance and Article 1 was again discussed. There were questions about if there was anyone else that used this substance on the Island that Richard knew of. If he know how it reacted with snow and snow plowing. Mr. Olsen replied that he did not know the answers to those questions, had not worked with the substance before, and "doesn't want to put it down."

A motion was made to recommend the article replacing the \$30,000 with \$10,000, and use the present wording. The motion was seconded and passed with 4 in favor and one opposed.

Article 4 was read: To see if the Town will vote to transfer from Free Cash the sum of Two Thousand Seven Hundred Fourteen Dollars and Thirty-four Cents for Tri-Town Ambulance Advanced Life Support Coordinator, and One Thousand Two Hundred Sixty-Five Dollars and Thirty-Four Cents for Tri-Town Ambulance Coordinator to be added to the FY 2007 Budget. This Article has to do with the re-grading of the Tri-Town Ambulance Adv. Life Support Coordinator and the upgrading of the Tri-Town Ambulance Coordinator.

A motion was made to recommend Article 4. The motion was seconded and approved with 4 in favor and one opposed.

Article 9 was read: To see if the Town will vote to amend the Driveway Bylaw to read "Any new driveway, or any alteration to an existing driveway, accessing a Town road shall require a Driveway Permit from the Town's Superintendent of Streets, and shall meet the following criteria..." This article was triggered by an existing driveway that was being redone and was originally graded so that water would drain onto the road (although this ended up not happening).

A motion was made to recommend Article 9. The motion was seconded and passed with 5 in favor and none opposed.

A motion was made to approve the October 10th Finance Committee minutes. The motion was seconded and approved with all in favor.

A motion was made to accept the October 23rd Finance Committee minutes as amended and with Skip Manter's disclaimer. The motion was seconded and approved with all in favor.

Correspondence

The Superintendent of Schools sent an approved budget of \$138,000. This is an increase of 5% over last year's budget. It was suggested that the WT Finance Committee should meet with the Finance Committees of Chilmark and Aquinnah to discuss this increase. The WT Finance Committee had sent a letter to the Superintendent of Schools office recommending a 0% increase. The WT FinCom members are not in agreement with the 5% increase.

Richard Knabel presented a table that he got from the DOR, extracted from their website, which compared the state average per capita spending on education to the other island towns. This table also showed the annual growth rate of the towns, the 2005 population, the annual population growth, the % spent on education and some of the per pupil costs.

- The per capita spending on education in West Tisbury is \$2,494. This is similar to Aquinnah and Chilmark, but significantly higher than Oak Bluffs, Edgartown and Tisbury.
- The % spent on Education for West Tisbury is 60.5% as compared to the state average of 46% and the other island towns in the high 30% range.
- The actual PPE when corrected for students at the Charter School is approximately \$22,500, which is significantly higher than the down-island towns by \$11,000-\$6,000.

Mr. DeVito reviewed the meeting times of interest coming up in the next month.

The departmental budget meetings with the FinCom were discussed. The FinCom will not meet with the smaller departments, but will meet with the large departments and those who were requested last year to have a plan and goals. It was pointed out that some departments need to identify their sources of revenue as requested last year and that others should be asked to have a more formal arrangement about building maintenance, perhaps a 3-year plan.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:05 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Bonnie Eldridge, Administrative Clerk.